

# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP



BOMA Member Since 2000

Member spotlight:

## Sue Ziemski

Senior Property Manager, Artis REIT  
National Manager – Sustainable Buildings, Artis REIT

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### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY?

In this industry you often hear most of us say that we, “fell into our careers as property managers”. My foray into Property Management started in my 20th year as an RBC employee when I was performing an audit function at their Data Centre. The Manager of Operations was impressed with how I conversed with the trades personnel that frequented the building. So when we decided to renovate the entire Data Center I was given the project to manage. Shortly after I managed the transformation of the Sask Data Center in Regina, to a Personal Service Centre for 500 staff. After that there was no “going back”. I loved the work and have been at it for 18 years.

### **WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT JOB TITLE?**

I have a dual hat. I am a Senior Property Manager with Artis REIT, and National Manager – Sustainable Buildings for their Canadian Portfolio.

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES?**

I property manage the Royal Bank Building at 220 Portage along with three unenclosed retail strip malls in Winnipeg. For sustainability, I assist Artis through the development and implementation of their environmental sustainability commitments using the various platforms of LEED, Energy Star, BOMA BEST, and utilities tracking software.

### **HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A BOMA MEMBER?**

Since 2000.

### **WHY DID YOU BECOME A MEMBER?**

I was a guest at several BOMA lunches and I saw the value of membership. Conversing with others in my field and the expertise of the Allied membership how could I not want to be a member? As I was already deep into my continuing education path for my FMA and RPA with BOMI, it was an opportunity to broaden my knowledge base.

### **WHAT ROLES HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN WITH BOMA?**

For BOMA Manitoba I have sat for 8 years on the board right through to chair and past chair positions. During my last few years on the BOMA MB board I sat on the BOMA Canada Board. Presently I sit on the BOMA MB education committee to promote continuing education for our members and to entice others into the field as a career path. I am also the chair of BOMI Canada.

### **WHAT'S THE VALUE YOU SEE IN BEING INVOLVED AND PARTICIPATING IN BOMA?**

From the financial side, you can take advantage of reduced pricing for BOMA BEST certifications and seminars. As well, other education offerings are significantly lower in price than a lot of other providers. Membership dues are so affordable that they basically cover the price of the 10 luncheons throughout the year. Luncheon meetings always feature someone or some topic of relevance to the industry. The awards programs give you an opportunity to profile your building's/company's accomplishments. The golf tournaments and poker tournament, afford time to develop a relationship with people for your mutual interest.

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS YOU SEE IN BECOMING A MEMBER?**

Most beneficial is the reliance you can place on the BOMA membership to help you in a pinch or guide you when you are not sure of the best or "tested" way to perform a function.

E.g. best type of roofing to apply for certain applications, boiler maintenance issues, advantages of different security systems, who to talk to at the City for code questions. From what I have experienced from the Allied members is a genuine desire to help rather than push a product. From the Principal membership we often talk about the market, new entrants into our city, upcoming builds, salary issues, employment search opportunities for vacant positions and our common issues so we can lobby for a solution. Knowing that you are not alone with an issue always lessens anxiety and helps you focus on an answer.

### **DO YOU THINK BECOMING A MEMBER HAS HELPED YOU IN YOUR CAREER? HOW?**

Absolutely – membership with BOMA MB has helped me in my career. From the get go, I was encouraged to participate on the board, enter my building for the awards programs and participate on committees. Every new committee or event I participated in only served to further my understanding of the industry that I had "fallen into". Even something as simple as developing the ability to speak in front of a group of people with ease. Over the course of 5 years from 2006 to 2011, I spoke at many seminars and BOMEX functions on the topic of Go Green & BOMA BEST. Being a proponent of "green" issues is, I believe, the primary reason that I am now the National Manager – Sustainable Buildings for Artis. This passion for Greening would never have developed had I not been involved with BOMA's Go Green program.

BOMA has helped me to develop a sense of self, to understand what knowledge I already possess and what areas to focus, not only my education efforts, but on what areas I could best serve the community.

### **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO NEW MEMBERS AND THOSE WHO AREN'T AS ACTIVE?**

The BOMA group is an incredible gathering of really nice people who each have their own talents. You always feel like you belong. You may get to a lunch by yourself and in minutes feel a welcome part of the group. Getting involved in different committees allows you to either offer really sound advice based on your expertise or be on the receiving end, learning new procedures, policies, codes and help in the creation of new ones.

In reading the statistics of the upcoming dearth of property managers and facility people I encourage everyone to invite co-workers and others to a luncheon to see this great group of people and how our industry is really a career with potential. ■